

## WILDERNESS TRAIL

In this central area, the trail offers many examples of the natural environment and the plants, animals, trees and flowers that prosper in the West Duffin Valley.

You will find hidden groves of hemlock, and remnants of the virgin forest which contained maple and beech before the arrival of man. Some trees on the site are 300-400 years old.

In many moist areas dead elms are being replaced by cedar thickets, often covered by wild grape vines. White pine seedlings (35) gradually invade the unpastured meadows and, over time, these become home for birds, deer, and other wildlife.

## WALKING TRAIL

From Camp Pidaca to Clarkes Hollow, the trail provides a gentle hiking path. One of the most magnificent views of the valley occurs at The Lookout (26). The height of land is the shoreline of an old glacial lake—Lake Iroquois. Over the years, the Duffin Creek has cut its way through the rise creating a large flood plain as it meanders to Lake Ontario.

A good example of the stream ecology can be acquired at (20). Take a look at the water. Get in if you like. Fish, plants and insects, along with thousands of microscopic creatures exist in harmony throughout the year with the only changes caused by alterations in stream flow and water temperature.

**NOTE: DAYTIME OR OVERNIGHT CAMPING, CAMPFIRES, MOTORIZED VEHICLES ARE PROHIBITED.**

# The SEATON Hiking Trail

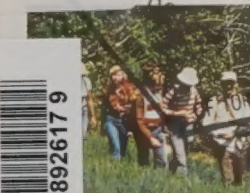
West Duffin Valley

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## THE SEATON HIKING TRAIL

West Duffin Valley

The North Pickering planning area covers some 25,200 acres and is situated north-east of Metropolitan Toronto. This beautiful acreage will encompass the new community of Seaton on 7000 acres located on the east side of the West Duffin Creek.

Seaton, designed to attract those who choose to both live and work in the same community will be home to between 75,000 to 90,000 persons.

On the west side of the West Duffin Creek, Ontario Land Corporation holds 10,200 acres which will remain in long term agricultural use and an Open Space System of approximately 8,000 acres is situated along the south and west boundary of the Planning Area.

## THE HIKING TRAIL

The hiking trail was created in co-operation with the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and developed with high school and university students under Ontario's summer works program.

The trail, a living laboratory that provides a natural science experience for everyone, is a single, uninterrupted link of more than 1,000 acres stretching from Green River in the north to Camp Pidaca in the south, a distance of 7.2 kilometres (4.5 miles). With twists and turns the actual walking distance is over 10 kilometres (6 miles).

The trail contains three sections:

1. **A walking trail** from Camp Pidaca to Clarkes Hollow where easy walking enables you to view a range of natural features, animals and sights at leisure.
2. **A wilderness trail** located in the mid-portion from Clarkes Hollow to Whitevale. This area presents an ideal setting to experience "true wilderness", a feature that is becoming increasingly rare in southern Ontario.
3. **A heritage trail** from Whitevale to Green River where old millworks, ponds and lowland woods have been used to highlight the natural/historic features of the area.

## REACHING THE TRAIL

North: the entrance is located on the south side of Highway 7 at Green River approximately 8 kilometres (5 miles) east of Markham. South: Take the Brock Road exit from Highway 401, then the first left north of Finch Avenue to Camp Pidaca. (See map)

The trail is marked with single yellow rings (double rings in case of direction change). Keep these in sight and you remain on the designated path. While you're on the trail, remember: watch your use of matches and take care when disposing of litter.

## THE WEST DUFFIN VALLEY

The trail follows the West Duffin Valley which provides a fascinating series of links of man with nature. These go back centuries to when Indians roamed the area harvesting abundant salmon and game. In pioneer times, the valley was the site for several water-powered mills which became the area's economic lifeline. A grist mill still exists at Whitevale, but the remainder of the valley has, for decades, been little used. Instead it has become a pleasant refuge of wooded slopes and floodplain meadows.

## HERITAGE TRAIL

This part of the trail contains a variety of natural and human historic structures highlighted to symbolize the change that has occurred over time. (see map)

The delicate balance between animals, plants and the physical environment can be observed at the stream (52). (Watch out for deep holes created by water erosion on the steep sides).

The Old Dam Site (44) illustrates the works of people a 100 years ago. The dam held back the pond water which was then channeled into the mill. The gates were operated manually in times of high water, a laborious and at times, dangerous job. Until 1975, water from the dam powered the mill. The waterwheel used by the mill is still there.

The village of Whitevale (40) contains several buildings that provide a strong sense of what the community was like during its economic heyday in the 19th century.

